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Public Health Reports

Treasury Department, United States Marine-Hospital Service. Published in accordance with act of Congress approved February 15, 1893.

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UNITED STATES.

Copy of correspondence relative to placing officers of the United States Marine-Hospital Service on army transports, and at conquered Cuban and Puerto Rican ports, to act as sanitary inspectors.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, July 30, 1898.

SIR : To expedite the movement of our transports and minimize the danger of their exposure to infection, I have the honor to request :

(1) That medical officers of the United States Marine-Hospital Service be immediately detailed for duty at Santiago, and subsequently at other Cuban or Puerto Rican ports under control of the United States forces, to carry out the requirements of the quarantine law of 1893. Such officers to issue certificates and, perform other duties of sanitary or port inspectors.

(2) That all sanitary matters pertaining to the condition of transports and crews be placed under the jurisdiction of medical officers of the United States Marine-Hospital Service. Every vessel engaged in the transport service between the United States and Cuban or Puerto Rican ports to carry a medical officer of the Army or of the Marine-Hospital Service, whose duty shall be that of sanitary inspector of the vessel, and who shall see that in a foreign port no material or person is taken aboard liable to convey yellow fever; to keep the crews of the transports under surveillance, and on the return voyage act as sanitary inspector.

(3) That there be placed at Santiago and every chief port where practicable a receiving ship for the reception of those who take passage for ports in the United States. This ship would be practically a detention camp and quarantine station, and passengers seeking homeward voyage would be taken from this vessel after they had undergone a period of observation and disinfection of their effects.

The Surgeon-General of the United States Marine-Hospital Service

informs me the effect of placing officers of the Service on our transports would be, if no communication is held between the transport and the shore, as above indicated, and no yellow fever breaks out on board en route to the United States, that disinfection of the transport on arrival will not be required.

The present working of the quarantine laws prevents our unloading any transports coming from Santiago at Fortress Monroe without first being quarantined; to avoid which we are ordering the transports as rapidly as they arrive at Fortress Monroe to New York. This condition exists as well at Tampa, where all our vessels coming from Santiago are being quarantined.

Very respectfully,

R. A. ALGER,
Secretary of War.

HON. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
Washington, D. C., August 3, 1898.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of July 30, requesting that medical officers of the Marine-Hospital Service be detailed at Santiago, and subsequently at Cuban and Puerto Rican ports under control of United States forces, to carry out the requirements of the quarantine law of 1893; and also that the transports belonging to the United States, and their crews, be placed under the supervision of sanitary inspectors of the Marine-Hospital Service in order that no material or persons may be taken aboard at the foreign port liable to convey yellow fever, all with a view to prevent the introduction of yellow fever into the United States, and also to prevent the transports themselves becoming infected, and thus subject to unnecessary delays due to quarantine restrictions at ports of the United States.

In reply, I have to state that I have approved the recommendations made in your letter, and have directed the Surgeon-General of the Marine-Hospital Service to take necessary measures for carrying them into effect.

Respectfully, yours,

O. L. SPAULDING,
Acting Secretary.

HON. SECRETARY OF WAR.

NOTE —Sanitary Inspector H. S. Caminero, United States Marine-Hospital Service, who before the inauguration of hostilities with Spain was on duty at Santiago, and who since that date has been at Kingston, Jamaica, was ordered to return to Santiago on the 12th of July, 1898, and was instructed to resume his duties at that port. His arrival was reported on the 19th ultimo.

In accordance with the above request of the Hon. Secretary of War, officers of the United States Marine-Hospital Service have been detailed for duty at Santiago, and on several army transports, and the following instructions have been issued for their guidance.

INSTRUCTIONS TO MEDICAL OFFICERS OF THE MARINE-HOSPITAL
SERVICE ON BOARD TRANSPORTS OF WAR DEPARTMENT.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *August 3, 1898.*

(1) Your duties are primarily to keep the transports from becoming infected.

(2) At the foreign port the crews must be forbidden and prevented from going ashore; everything brought on board from shore must be inspected, and if doubt exists, rejected or disinfected. All persons